

Sheila K. Myers

The Gateway Voyage experience was one of the greatest experiences of my life, bar none. I am sure you have heard this before, but that can't take away from the authenticity of my personal experience. Although I am still in the process of assimilating that week with the Institute, it remains a very pleasant memory and one I wish I could replicate exactly even though I know I can't.

My colleagues going through it with me were a diverse group by profession and age, and just a great group of people. We had policemen, masseuses, teachers, interpreters and others represented. Plus, the physical surroundings were so lovely that they too acted as a conduit to higher levels of thought.

What the Gateway Voyage unearthed for me was not something I expected. In fact, I came to the program without preconceived ideas even though I was somewhat familiar with Robert Monroe's books. I was and still am excited about the process, which is a catalyst to me for further exploration. When time and money coincide, I intend to experience (there is no better word) more of your residential programs.

Finally, I was fortunate to have a receptive audience and a kind audience. Certainly in some other situations I would have been laughed off of the stage, as it were. Here, people were entertained and hopefully a bit illuminated by what I experienced. I had a common thread running through my week. My experiences at one point were so intense I had to seek counsel. The advice I got helped immensely. I certainly benefited from others' experiences and saw for myself how realizations can shake other's own foundations to the very core to the degree that they were also in need of advice, really more than I was since I have already in my past been rocked to the core by other catalytic forces. But even so, that week was powerful. I am definitely an advocate for exploration in consciousness for those who would be pioneers.

Mary Graham

I would like to verbalize how meaningful my experience at the Monroe Institute was. However, I cannot find words to adequately describe it. I have often argued that music can sometimes express feelings that our language cannot. But since I do not write music, nor could I well transfer it to you, I will make an attempt at a thank you via this media. I attended your Gateway Voyage July 10-16. You very generously extended to me a scholarship. Because of this, I feel I have definitely had an "awakening". After the loss of my second son, I was more than devastated and found it difficult to come back into an emotional or spiritual world. I only played the pieces.

After my week's experience and the easy access to such deep meditation, I was able to not only regain, but also surpass my ability to cleanse and renew myself as well as get back on my spiritual journey. I realized that with all my "knowledge" I had not let go of my youngest son. I met him in Focus 21. He could not understand why he had been in a room for so long, locked up. I told him he shouldn't have been and that he should be free to follow the white light. What a freedom for us both! I have since been able to go back and visit he and his brother.

And I have been able to re-establish my relationship with God and myself. And therefore...others.

I was very fortunate to have extremely talented trainers (Macca and Bob) and to be with a group of very open-minded people, all on different paths.

The Monroe Institute applies to so many age groups, so many interest and yet so many like-minded family that you feel at home and comfortable almost immediately.

I hope to be able to attend other sessions and continue on my path with the tools given by Monroe: books, tapes, continual correspondence with other group members, and meditative techniques. I hope that in the future I am able in some way to give back what you have given me.

Again, I am ever grateful.

Geary Atkins

I have so many thoughts, (all of them positive), about my seven visits to TMI from October 2000 when I took my Gateway Voyage®, until my most recent Lifelines for the second time.

First, my interest in The Monroe Institute began around 1997. I had read all of Bob Monroe's books and taken the Gateway Experience home course. I found out about the Institute as a real place when I read a magazine article about Hemi-Sync® and brain-wave functioning. At the time I was an EEG technician at Yale New Haven Medical Center in New Haven Connecticut. When I saw that there was a place to actually visit and take programs relating to expanding one's consciousness, I became excited about the prospect of actually coming to the Institute.

Being a naturally cautious person but having an open mind, I went on the Internet and learned from many different sources all I could about The Monroe Institute and it being

a legitimate and renowned organization in the study of human consciousness and the expansion of it.

Being an ordinary person, I felt intimidated by coming to a place so well known in the world and not fitting in because of my lack of experience and knowledge of what was being taught there. Well, that was the least of my concerns when I finally got up the courage to overcome my sense of insecurity. I surmise many people initially feel drawn to attend but are shy, or insecure about being in a strange place with many new people who "know" their way around the program.

This is as far from reality as it can get when it comes to how it actually is when you get to the Institute. It took me from 1997 to 2000 to feel the pull so strongly that I overcame my reticence and called to sign up for the October 2000 Gateway Voyage.

When arriving, I had some anxiety but felt more excitement than anything else. From Mike picking me up at the airport and stopping to pick up other participants who were also first timers, the excitement just built up. Everyone was in a positive and excited state. When we arrived at Nancy Penn, Kendra a wonderful young lady greeted us and showed us our rooms. She was a great help and made us all feel welcome.

We spent the early afternoon walking the grounds and talking to each other. By this time all my shyness and insecurity was gone. I began to introduce the late arrivals to one another and the group that had come early with me. I have never felt so comfortable in any group situation in my entire life and I am now 62 years old.

Our Gateway Voyage was incredible as anyone who has taken it knows. Frankly, it changed my life in terms of my belief system expanding and knowing there are no limitations for the human mind, only those we place there with our beliefs. I returned home and found that there were few people I could talk to who could understand what I had experienced.

But there were a few, and to this day those few still hang on my every word when I return from a program at TMI. Two of these people are my son and daughter, (ages 34 and 35), and three other close friends, one who I will be bringing to a Companion Gateway soon along with my daughter who lives in France and has followed my progress since I began coming to TMI.

I have found with the TMI programs I have taken that the people who are in attendance at the time the program is held are just as important as the actual program that is being taught, especially the trainers who are an integral part of the mix. They help to provide a safe, secure, and non-judgmental comforting atmosphere for everyone.

There is no dogma taught in any way. One can express their own ideas and beliefs and

not be judged or alienated. I have found this aspect of the groups so fascinating that I tell everyone I know about it. All these many different people from different countries, races and backgrounds all bond together within a few days.

We share things that we hardly ever would share with our friends back home, meaning what you really think about life and why we are here and who we really are. At least once during a program, subsets of the group discuss what we tell our friends back home about where we have been and what we do when we come here.

It never fails to make us laugh how most of us make up a story about going to "a retreat" somewhere and getting massages and hiking etc. Although this is true, we don't feel it will be understood, and we will be judged by our peers to be "out there."

I have resisted this holding back, and for the most part, depending who I am speaking with, tell them to go to the website and read about the Institute, as well as read some of Bob's books to thoroughly understand. If they do this and are interested in coming to TMI, I let them know I will accompany them to their first Gateway Voyage.

I am a vastly different person since my yearly visits to TMI, and its wonderful programs have helped me to open an already open mind even further. I am able to live my life now with an openhearted joy for life and the people in it, with gratitude to our Creator.

I now live in the moment, mindfully aware of what I think and what I do, being accountable and responsible for everything that emanates from my heart and mind. I have done much traveling in my life, but coming to TMI at least once and sometimes twice a year revitalizes me and gives me new hope that there is a better way to live my life.

After a year of being back in "everyday reality" I need to get myself to TMI to cleanse and rebalance my emotional and spiritual life, as we all know life is what you make it yet, it is what it is, and we have to deal with it. My perspective on life is clear and my journey through it remains a joyful adventure.

Meeting new and interesting people that leave me a part of their essence each time we meet at TMI recharges me and makes this life so much sweeter each day. I will end this now and I hope you can feel my words and what emotions they evoke. TMI is a positive life-changing experience for me, and I feel it can be for you.

An open heart can open a closed mind if you give it a chance.

Tim Phalen

I just came back from Gateway on Saturday. I'm not nearly over the experience, and don't plan to be for a very long time.

Here's what I can tell you about what I feel most sums up what I saw and felt:

- *The group energy will supercharge your experience. It will heighten, by a power of ten, any experience you have had working solo.*
- *The staff, Penny and John, are exceptional trainers. Their love and attention is incredible.*
- *The building and grounds are beautiful.*
- *You (and the group of 24 or 25) are completely and totally immersed in the experience for 6 days. (It took most people 1-2 days to become completely immersed.) There is no way listening to one tape every now and then can compare.*
- *I found the energy so high, it was almost painful.*
- *You will live in no-time for 6 days and nights, your right brain will completely take over, and left-brain almost shut down.*
- *I felt more peace and at-home-ness than I have ever felt.*

My feeling is, if you are on the fence about it, just swing your feet to the far side (the uncomfortable side) and jump...there is always a gift on the other side.

P.S. if you do go, go with absolutely no preconceived notions or expectations. Across the board, people who had high expectations about certain ideas, saw none of their ideas manifest, but also, across the board, those with a totally open agenda, and open mind, received the greatest gifts. I know I did.

Don't think about it, just do it.

Impressions of the Gateway Voyage by Russ Mason, M.S.

In his best-selling autobiography, The Seven Storey Mountain, Thomas Merton wrote of an experience he had while attending Oakham, an English prep school. At the time, Merton was about sixteen years old.

He had gone for a walk in the countryside; and, upon finding a green and pleasant spot on a hill, sat down to admire the view. He remained for some time, enjoying the sunny day and the scenery.

After an hour or so Merton got up and began to walk back to school. He had not gone far when he realized that he had just experienced the most beautiful sight he had ever seen in his life; and only upon reflection did its impact become astonishing and meaningful.

In a small way, that was my experience with the Gateway Voyage at The Monroe Institute in Faber, Virginia. During my six days as a participant and resident, I was busy with activities: listening to tapes of Robert Monroe in my little booth, running downstairs in my socks to the White Rug Room to meet with the others, standing in line in the pretty dining room and craning my neck to see what was being served, hanging out on the Nancy Penn Center's long back porch, horsing around with some of the others.

But in the days-now a full week-which followed, I have found that through the gentle forges of new understandings, of kindredness and caring, that I have become sort of remarkable; something I could not have anticipated nor foreseen; something which has changed my core. It is as though the old me is gone and a new me has taken his place. Sensitive is a key word because I am now aware of subtle energies and sensations that were there all along, but which I had never noticed. It was as though I had been wearing blinders; restricting my perception to only what was directly in front of me. Now the blinders have widened, so with enhanced insight and intuition I am able to perceive energies I had probably never noticed before.

Gratitude is a key word also because I have received gifts, as a result of taking the Gateway Voyage. I knew the workshop would put me through various states of consciousness (referred to as Focus levels); but nobody ever said how I would feel as a result of them. For me, each Focus level was, and is, akin to an unexplored country, full of wonderful new vistas. With each succeeding voyage I become a little more aware, a little more sensitive to the seen and unseen. These are some gifts!

Thomas Merton, upon realizing the incredible beauty of what he had seen, turned and rushed back, to recapture the experience. But now the view had changed; and the magic of the moment was lost. It was still beautiful, but not in the way it was before. For, while he had sat on the grass and looked at the scene, Merton had been an integral part of it; now he was merely an observer.

If there is beauty in the Gateway Voyage, it is this: that I have learned to become aware of my intimate connection to others, to my surroundings, to my spirit guides, to my higher self, to All That Is; and to be grateful for the insights and understandings I receive. I don't do it perfectly-I am still learning. But I have been given a priceless map which will allow me to move more completely into new worlds of experience and knowing. It's way cool.